and you'd laugh to see how I tried to go to sleep. I might as well have been a fishworm on a stove.

It was almost four in the morning when I seen Annie standing over me pulling at the sheets. "Listen, Jim," says she. Sure enough, there was a thumping at the door and a man's voice shouting over the wind: "Let me in! Help! Open up!"

"Something's wrong at the factory," says I, putting my two feet on the floor and reaching for my clothes; but when I started down the stairs the stairs the wife was holding a kerosene lamp and she handed me my revolver.

"You'd best have it, Jim," he says. "How'd we know who it is?"

And little we guessed. For when the slap of the rain struck me and I'd wiped it off my face there stood old Joe Crane wet and white in the lips and done for breath, and he had my boy in his arms with a welt across the forehead ,and his yellow hair with dark streaks, and one of Joe's hands had blood on it.

"Bring him in," says Annie, holding up the lamp. "Is he dead?" she says. Old Joe's lips were moving, but he didn't say anything, and he laid the boy down on the sofa in the parlor. I went down on my knees beside the lad, and then I knew for the first time his heart was going, and I stood up and says, "What done it?" and old Joe kind of give way into a chair and says, "God help me, I done it!"

With that the lad squirms out and kind of weak and shaky falls up against old Joe. "It's all right, Mr. Crane," says he. "Don't you care," and the old man looks up and says, "Praise God, he ain't dead!" and opens up his arms and puts 'em around the boy.

It seemed to me I'd never loved that youngster so much as when I seen he'd rather go to old Joe than stay by me. "Here give the lad to me—he's mine, ain't he? I'm his dad, ain't I?" I said.

And I took him up to Annie, and she grabs him up, kissing him and talking and saying things and taking him upstairs to do for him what a mother's hands are handy to do.

"Jim," says old Crane, "you know how it was."

"The same old thing?" says I, and he says, "Yes, the same old thing."

"The little lad woke me up to let him in. He come to me before like that, and I ain't said anything, for he was lonesome and I was lonesome, too. God only knows how lonesome I was!"

"Then it was you he went to see when he run away?" I says. "And you never told it!"

"He was safe with me," he says, "and he was the only one who wanted to come to me, and who else is there going to care for me?" he says. "I used to whittle things for him out of wood, and he'd sit on my knee," he says, "and we was happy together," he says. "I knew it wasn't just right, and tonight I told him to go back to his home, and he wouldn't go, and he tried to lock me out of the room so's I couldn't put him out and send him home. And then the devil came over me hot and blind, and I struck him!" says he.

"I want to tell you why the boy came to me," he says. "Did you ever feel thirst?" says he, 'or hanker for food. 'Twas that way with the little feller; he come to me because he needed something he didn't get at home."

"And what was that?" says Annie, proud and cool and angry, but the old man didn't seem to hear her. "I was like that," he says kind of thoughtful. "I took after my mother. She was kind of warm-hearted and sensitive and tuned high. They said she uster play on the piano great, but she died before I could recollect. It was different with my father. He was well off when I can remember, but, of course, he must be dead by now. The world had used him tough, and I guess he thought it used everybody the same way. Maybe he was a good-